THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. Government has not released Rs. 22.00 crores to Government of Orissa to open 100 Grain Banks in the tribal districts in the first phase.

During 2001-02 an amount of Rs. 100.00 lakhs has been released to Government of Orissa for setting up 197 Grain Banks. The tribal mondals/blocks/ villages identified by the Central Planning Committee are only indicative and the States can set up Grain Banks as per their need. The type of foodgrains are the type normally consumed locally by the States. The details of target, number of Grain Banks established and funds released since 1996-97 (inception of the scheme) to Orissa are as follows :—

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	No. of Grain Banks to be established	Amount released	No. of Grains Banks established
1996-97	32	20.48	32
1997-98	35	22.40	35
1998-99	—	—	—
1999-2000	197	100.00	117
2000-2001	281	184.96	—
2001-2002	197	100.00	--
TOTAL :	742	427.87	184

Increase in food subsidy bill

2628. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that food subsidy bill which was Rs. 19.91 crores in 1948-49 has increased to Rs. 8100 crore in the current year's budget;

(b) if so, whether Government are making any attempt to reduce the subsidy without hurting interests of the poor consumers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, as Government can immediately implement the suggestion at point 31 of the Report relating to Gunny Charges, to reduce Subsidy Bill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) There is a provision of Rs. 13,675 crore in the BE for 2001-2002 for food subsidy, (including Rs. 5 crore for Sugar).

(b) and (c) Some of the measures taken to reduce the subsidy are as follows :

(i) In order to increase the offtake of foodgrains and reduce the buffer costs, Government has reduced the Central Issue Price of wheat from Rs. 830/- per qtl. to Rs. 610/- per qtl. and for rice from Rs. 1130/- per qtl. to Rs. 830/- per qtl. for APL families w.e.f. 12-7-2001 till 31-3-2002 or till surplus stocks last whichever is earlier;

(ii) Export of wheat and rice;

(iii) Allotment of foodgrains for Food for Work Programme and other welfare schemes;

(iv) The allocation of foodgrains for BPL families has been increased from 20 kg per family per month to 25 kg per family per month at BPL rates from July 2001. The basis of allocation of foodgrains for BPL families was changed to the population projections of the Registrar General as on 1-3-2002 instead of the projected population of 1995.

(v) Foodgrains at BPL rates are available for allotment to State Governments @ 5 kg per head per month for covering categories of indigent people living in welfare institutions such as beggar homes, hostels for SC/ST Backward students/ Nari-Niketan etc. sponsored by the State Governments and the concerned administrative Ministry of the Government of India. Foodgrains can now be allocated, under the Annapurna Scheme, to indigent old persons even in the case of those receiving old age pension from the State Government;

(vi) Foodgrains at CIP applicable for BPL families will be allocated for welfare schemes implemented by the various Ministries of the Government of India;

(vii) Foodgrains will be allocated for development schemes (where the beneficiaries belong to BPL category), implemented by NGOs sponsored by the State Governments and endorsed by the administrative Ministry in the Government of India, as also by International Organisation like the World Food Programme;

(viii) Government have also launched Antyodaya Anna Yojana on 25-12-2000. Under this scheme, Government will release wheat and rice @ Rs. 2/- and Rs. 3/- per kg. respectively subject to 25 kg. per family per month to approximately one crore poorest of the poor families all over the country, and the State Governments have accordingly been requested to identify these families.

(ix) Certain measures have been taken by the Food Corporation of India to reduce costs, *viz.*, reduction in inccurrence of shortages, demurrages, better utilisation of storage space etc.

The Expenditure Reforms Commission (ERC) recommended use of synthetic bags for packaging of rice (Point 31 of the First Report of ERC). The Government has ordered for 100% compulsory packaging foodgrains and sugar in Jute bags for the year 2001-2002. Jute, in terms of the Jute Packaging Material Act, 1987. An Inter-Ministerial Committee was constituted on 31-8-2001 to formulate a road map for the progressive dilution of compulsory packaging norms for foodgrains and sugar under the JPM Act, 1987.

Raw sugar for export

2629. SHRI ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether raw variety of sugar is on demand for export;

(b) if so, the incentives proposed to be given for producing raw sugar in bulk for export; and

(c) the other incentives proposed to be given as subsidy to boost sugar exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) The share of raw sugar in the world export market is about 58% of the total export in the calendar years 1999 and 2000 as per the statistical information published by the International Sugar Organisation. India, however, exports generally plantation white sugar and export of raw sugar from India is very small.

(b) Loan from the Sugar Development Fund at concessional rate of interest is available to sugar factories intending to change their process for manufacture raw sugar/refined sugar.